

**Rochester Police Commission
Rochester, NH 03867**

Lucien G. Levesque, Chairman
Bruce E. Lindsay, Commissioner
Derek J. Peters, Commissioner

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

The Rochester Police Commission held their regular monthly meeting at the Police Department on Weds. February 19, 2014. This meeting had been postponed from February 5, 2014 due to weather. Present at this meeting was Comm. Levesque, Comm. Lindsay, Comm. Peters, Chief Allen, Capt. Toussaint, Attorney Grossman, Chaplain Lachapelle, Secretary Warburton and members of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M.

A. Pledge. All participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Prayer. Chaplain Lachapelle led the opening prayer.

C. Roll Call. The clerk called the roll marking all Commissioner's present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Alex Boros said he has been a Rochester resident since the summer of 2000. He has respect for the Police and never had a problem until October of 2013 when he had an issue with a local merchant in the downtown. Mr. Boros was uncomfortable with the way the police department handled the situation and even after meeting with the involved officer was still not satisfied.

Chief Allen said talking with supervision is generally the next step in the process if you are not satisfied. Chief Allen provided Mr. Boros his card to call and set up an appointment to discuss this matter further.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

A. January 8, 2014 – regular meeting

Comm. Peters MOVED to accept the minutes of the January 8, 2014 meeting as submitted. SECOND by Comm. Lindsay and PASSED unanimously.

4. **OLD AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

A. FY15 Budget Discussion: Chief Allen provided the commission with copies of the issues and options forms that are part of our budget submission. These are things we are looking to have the council add back to the budget. The one thing the City Manager did add back because he supports it was the 11th dispatcher position. We still need to get to the 1.5% and getting there means personnel. We are suggesting to cut the Communications Supervisor position, but, have added an issues and options sheet for the Council to put those funds back in.

Comm. Peters asked about discussions on renegotiating with Frisbie Hospital due to their call volume.

Chief Allen said that we did that last year and the conversation didn't go as well as planned.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Recognitions. The recognitions scheduled were pushed out to the March meeting.

B. Accept Resignation: Officer Eric Krans. Chief Allen noted that Officer Krans had resigned and taken a similar position with the Portsmouth Police Department. He will receive a higher salary and the work volume is less. He is a young officer and did a great job for us. But he had an opportunity to go and he took it. We wish we could have offered something to convince him to stay, but we couldn't.

Comm. Peters MOVED to accept the resignation, with regret. SECOND by Comm. Lindsay. The motion PASSED unanimously.

The Commission asked that a letter be sent to Officer Krans thanking him for his service.

C. Standard Operating Procedure 31.2.2; Police Officer Selection, Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Plan: Update First Reading. Chief Allen noted the change was minor housekeeping to adjust the numbers of current personnel regarding affirmative action and updating our goal numbers.

Comm. Peters MOVED to place policy 31.2.2 into First Reading. SECOND by Comm. Lindsay and PASSED unanimously.

Comm. Peters MOVED to place policy 31.2.2 into SECOND Reading for adoption. SECOND by Comm. Lindsay and PASSED unanimously.

D. Monthly Reports

1. Operations. Capt. Toussaint noted half of the wards held meetings in January, and no major concerns were brought up. Motor vehicle concerns were forwarded to the ward officer and the motor vehicle unit.

Housing Officer Blair assisted several tenants with securing hotels after pipes burst due to cold weather. He has also been active in enforcing laws and participating in community policing.

The K9 team had tracks as well as drug searches, including a search at the high school at the request of the administration. Off. MacKenzie organizes that through the working dog foundation and brings in teams from area departments. The students are kept in the classrooms while the teams are paired with a school administrator and the dogs walk along the lockers. No issues were uncovered. If there had been the school has opted to handle that administratively.

Comm. Levesque asked during school drug searches are the lockers locked?

Capt. Toussaint said the dogs can smell contraband without going into each locker. If the dog “hits” on a locker then the administration can open the locker.

In comp stat we continue to address property crimes. Several areas of property crimes have shown increases over the year, but overall, if you remove the shoplifting category, we have a 2% decrease for the year. We are working with the stores and with social media to publicize shoplifting incidents. Officer Hayes continues to promote the retailers link which contains information on suspects, security photos and things of that nature that can be shared to keep retailers informed. It has been well received.

The midnight shift ended the very successful breakfast program with St. Charles. This is no longer a residential facility.

Over on the support side there were five callouts for the month including a shooting on Route 11 and a shooting on Leonard Street. Additionally there were two call outs for organized retail fraud where four people from out of state were buying gift cards with stolen credit cards. We are working with the secret service on this because this is spanning multiple states. Our investigation is ongoing. We also had a commercial burglary at Lamberts. Evidence was turned over to the State of Maine for felony charges in this incident.

We are still down two positions in the communications center. We had been using Officer Turner on TAD, but she has gone out on leave. We will be using overtime to fill those shifts. We do have a candidate in the final phases of the process and one other in the background phase. So we are filling shifts with specialists and police officers. It is less expensive to use a specialist but we have more shifts than current staff can fill.

Comm. Peters commented that he would rather not use Police or Fire in there as they have their own jobs to do.

Comm. Peters noted that the regular salary is in good shape, but overtime is taking a big hit. Will the City Manager allow moving some of those dollars?

Chief Allen replied the City does allow this and they have to do this most every year. But they wait until the end of the year to do that.

Chief Allen said that Police Officers get special training before working a shift in there. And officers are paired with a certified dispatcher. The officer dispatches the police side, as that is what they are familiar with.

The POP Officer has maintained a presence in the downtown doing enforcement and liaising with the business community. She has begun planning the third annual wings and wheels event. Off. Hayes has spearheaded this and brought it to the City. She is also heavily involved with our social media presence. She started a “most wanted Monday” posting the photo of a wanted person each week. So far we have apprehended three people. We get a lot of tips through face book.

As reported our prosecutor has taken a new job in Newcastle and we are short staffed in there. Lt. Gould and Det. Loignon will be working closely to carry on the workload. We are juggling people and having them do different jobs. We will also be down the full time secretary for a period due to a personal issue.

Chief Allen said we are evaluating options to see if current staff can manage it and looking at alternatives to get help in there through the County Attorney. He is willing to do that if we need it. The next couple of weeks will tell us the direction we need to go.

We had 295 youth attend the January Teen night. We had nine people from PD attending.

2. Administration Chief Allen said that our current projection on the bottom line through the end of the year is looking good. We should be in the black with a surplus mostly due to salaries and benefit lines.

Our CIP presentation was 100% supported with the exception we made to the cruiser radio issue. We cut the request in half and will just replace them as we go with the theory they won't all fail at once. This will give us some money to do that.

The animal control truck didn't pass inspection. We were looking for a replacement through military surplus and have had no luck. There are no grants out there for this. We reached out to DPW and they had a one year newer truck they have loaned us to get us through this fiscal year.

Comm. Levesque said in the replacement plan you are looking for two front line and two back line cars. Didn't we used to move the front line cars to the back line?

Chief Allen said we did do that in the past but it is not cost effective due to the age and mileage of the front line cars. We bought smaller fuel efficient vehicles, but honestly they are not designed well for police use. We will see what is allocated for funds this year and that will guide us on what car we will purchase for the backline.

Comm. Peters inquired about a 6-cyl Charger for the backline vs. the 8-cyl we are using on the front line.

Chief Allen said that it boils down to cost and available dollars. We need to keep the fleet in good shape. When we don't stick to the replacement plan the age and mileage cause the cars not to hold up and then they get dead lined. It's not cost effective to dump money into a car with 100,000 miles on it. We when have deviated from the plan it takes a couple of years to catch up. The Council has been very good about sticking to the plan these past couple of years.

Comm. Peters inquired into the ComLog.

Chief Allen said that does need to be replaced. The City Manager is supporting it, but we will have to wait to see what the Council does.

Lt. Thomas is at the FBI Academy. He graduates on March 28th. Chief Allen noted he will be attending the graduation.

We are doing backgrounds on four candidates, hoping to fill the three slots we have. Once we get through these we will have exhausted our eligibility hiring list. If we get three viable candidates we should be able to meet Academy deadlines. We are working as quickly as we can.

Comm. Lindsay asked how the new hires were doing.

Chief Allen said that Officer Powers moved from in house to Field Training. Officer Cilley has been released to solo patrol. Officer Forrest is participating in field training because he is part time certified. When we do his training review board, it's possible that he could get released to patrol if his training officer is comfortable with where he is at.

We are moving forward with the crime analyst position and contracting that service with Bair Analytics. We interviewed four candidates and made an offer to the top candidate, which was declined due to the salary being offered. We have moved on to the second candidate who is from Texas and in the process of working out relocation details. This candidate has a statistical background and has interned as a crime analyst. We won't have to buy software and pay maintenance fees, which is a cost savings to us. Bair supplies all the software. We will still have the public interface software.

The grant money finally came through for Teen night, approved by the Governor and Executive Council. We are already starting to buy supplies.

Comm. Peters inquired if we've had any resolution with the issue with the Glock firearms?

Chief Allen said they replaced the firing pins and we are continuing to work with them on this issue.

Comm. Lindsay inquired who in the department has cell phones. Is the city thinking of an umbrella policy regarding the codes and password access?

Chief Allen said the commanders and detectives have phones. We are part of a pooled minute plan. He believes the City is working on an upgraded policy.

6. CORRESPONDENCE:

Members of the Department, including the following were recognized this month. Det. Dominique Murphy is recognized for assisting a homebound elderly city resident with an issue, including sanding the driveway. Sgt. Jeremy Aucoin and Lt. Anthony Bossi are thanked by Mother Paul Marie of the St. Charles Home for the breakfast program initiative with the children. Off. Gantert is thanked through the Department Face Book page for his professionalism at a recent accident scene. The Maine State Police recognize our letter thanking them for assisting us with a recent pursuit of a fugitive. Off. Harding is thanked by a citizen for his well-balanced approach during a traffic stop.

7. INFORMATION:

A. Information Other; enclosed with agenda: No discussion.

B. Ward Meeting. Comm. Peters noted that Wards 2 & 3 will hold a joint meeting to be held on March 24, 2014 at 6:30 P.M. at the Frisbie Hospital Education center. Comm. Peters noted he would be attending.

8. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: (Pursuant to: RSA 91-A:3)

Commissioner Peters MOVED to enter a nonpublic session at 7:58 P.M. pursuant to RSA 91-A: 3, paragraph II, section A (personnel) and section E (legal.) SECOND by Comm. Lindsay. The motion PASSED by roll call vote 3 – 0 with Comm. Peters, Comm. Lindsay and Comm. Levesque voting in the affirmative. The non-public session closed at 8:47 P.M. on a MOTION by Comm. Peters, SECOND by Comm. Lindsay and PASSED unanimously.

9. MISCELLANEOUS:

Following the non public session the Commission took the following action:

Comm. Peters MOVED to award merit increases on the respective anniversary dates to Off. J. Seckendorf, Sgt. P. Emerson, M. Flathers, Off. James Murphy, Off. J. Worthley, Off. B. Kimbrough, Off. J. Gantert, Off. S. Loignon SECOND by Comm. Lindsay and PASSED unanimously.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Comm. Levesque MOVED to adjourn. SECOND by Comm. Lindsay at 8:49 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca J. Warburton,
Secretary